## BOOK LIST
### English 3: American Literature & Writing
#### Fall 2021 / Spring 2022

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Author/Editor</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
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<td>9780143107323</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>BJU Press</td>
<td>9781606827338</td>
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<td>Twelve Angry Men</td>
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<td>Rose, Reginald</td>
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Please note:

- Books and materials requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the instructors.
- Books marked with * do not have required editions. Page numbers will differ between publishers.
- The *American Literature Anthology* is a custom resource created specifically for the Academy’s English 3 course. It can only be ordered through the Academy’s online bookstore.
- Essential American Documents & Speeches: Vol I is only available directly from Prestwick House Publishing, and can be purchased [here](#). If you seek to purchase a used or other copy, please pay close attention to the title of the book, as this ISBN has been linked to other, incorrect, titles.
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**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn** by Mark Twain

**SYNOPSIS:** Twain is easily one of the most memorable American authors, and this novel it is considered one of the top ten American novels ever written. This text focuses on a young orphan named Huck Finn and his journey across Mississippi in search of freedom from his abusive father. Along the way, he comes across Jim, an escaped slave who is also on the run towards freedom. The story recounts how this unlikely pair becomes friends no matter how difficult their adventure is. Twain captures the harsh realities of American themes that existed both before and after the Civil War, yet shares how one boy could make such a positive difference in the life of a runaway slave.

**REASON FOR TEACHING:** We recognize that this text is controversial, but it readily captures the complexities of racism both before and after the Civil War. It is sadly an
accurate display of American history; however, it is also a positive representation of how racism was not accepted by everyone and how some Americans were quick to help and fight for what was right. Through the use of Scripture and a variety of expository texts, students will evaluate this novel against American history and determine whether characters in Huck Finn responded biblically or not. Content discussions will look at prejudices and racism, intellectual and moral education, the hypocrisy of “civilized” society, and the value of human life on the sole basis that God created every individual and He revels in our differences. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include: satire, narrator, setting, symbolism, theme, rhetorical devices, diction, and tone.

DISCLAIMER: This text uses period language that captures the realities of American history. Most notably, it uses a pejorative term when referring to Jim, an African American. Momentary drunkenness, thievery, violence, and trickery show up throughout the text.

Parents who are concerned about the use of racially derogatory language in the novel are free to consider using the NewSouth Edition.

American Literature from BJU Press

SYNOPSIS: This is a well-known and popular publisher of curriculum that seamlessly integrates a biblical worldview with academic excellence. Its American Literature book presents the writings of America from its colonial beginnings to the present. Students will study the poetry, short stories, speeches, and essays that reflect the dynamic heritage of the American people. Covering the historical context, literary movements and principal players which have defined America, the Anthology rounds out the study of the individual works in this course. While students will learn the ideas that have shaped America, they more importantly, will learn to discern those ideas as either a vehicle of biblical truth or divergence from it. A few titles include Jonathan Edwards’ “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” Washington Irving’s “Rip Van Winkle,” Edgar Allen Poe’s “The Raven,” Stephen Crane’s “The Open Boat,” and John Steinbeck’s “Flight.”
**Billy Budd, Sailor**

**SYNOPSIS:** Herman Melville is most known for his epic *Moby Dick*. However, his final work, the novella *Billy Budd, Sailor*, is arguably his best. Adapted by Focus on the Family’s winning Radio Theatre team, this moving tale explores good versus evil, the law versus grace. Billy Budd, a young virtuous sailor aboard a 1700s British warship, is unfairly accused of treason by the villainous Master of Arms who despises Billy’s goodness and seeks to destroy him. Billy Budd will remind students of another man, perfectly just, who suffered and died a criminal’s death.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** This drama may be viewed as an allegory of the gospel. Melville’s novella is said to have been his attempt to reconcile his life-long struggle with the nature of good and evil—as such, it provides ample opportunity to discuss both with respect to the law, the administering of justice, and the role of mercy.

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**Essential American Documents & Speeches: Volume 1**

**SYNOPSIS:** This short anthology includes some of the most significant speeches and documents relevant to American history. It offers great diversity in rhetoric, depth, subject, and impact. Specific authors that will be studied include George Washington, Sojourner Truth, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** Our course will analyze how history impacted each author’s perspective and, therefore, his or her writing. Through these documents, students will learn about major cross-points in American history and how such moments influenced America’s political character, individuals’ beliefs and views, and essentially, the written word. Students will analyze the rhetoric, examine reasoning, and determine purpose, meaning, and effect for each document studied.
**Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury**

**SYNOPSIS:** This science fiction novel is categorized as a dystopian tale, set in a futuristic world where books are forbidden by law. Ray Bradbury explores how censorship thrives in darkness, showing that, when there is no light, people lose ability to create, explore, analyze, and question. The protagonist of the text, with the help of newfound friends, realizes how ideas are absolutely necessary for a free society.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** This text was written as a warning to what could happen if we become too obsessed by frantic consumption and shallow entertainment. Content discussions will look at some of the similarities between Bradbury’s 1953 warnings and our 21st century American society. We will also debate the ideas of censorship and banned books. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include dystopian and science fiction elements, literary devices, point-of-view, and theme.

**DISCLAIMER:** As with any dystopian style of text, there are science-fictional elements dealing with darker themes such as oppression, violence, and death. This text includes violent “technology” and a scene where a woman attempts to overdose on prescription pills.

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**Gilead by Marilynne Robinson**

**SYNOPSIS:** This 21st century novel is uniquely written in the form of a letter from an aging father to his young son. The father reflects back on stories and recollections and gives reasoning for why three generations of his family have all served as pastors of the Congregationalist church in Gilead. Through the course of this letter, readers are transported back in history to the Civil War and World War I, and along the way, they are presented with the challenges of this pastoral family as they attempt to minister to hurting people and a broken society.

→ **REASON FOR TEACHING:** This novel is highly acclaimed; it has won several prestigious honors and is currently considered one of the best novels from the 21st century. In addition, it is explicitly Christian in content and themes. The author organizes a complex story through the use of precise arrangement and style as she moves readers back and forth through history, over the course of three generations.
Our unit will focus on content as well as the development of complex characters and plot.

**DISCLAIMER:** The story grapples with a father's guilt, a son's refusal to follow Christ, and the bloodshed of two wars.

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**The Great Gatsby** by F. Scott Fitzgerald

**SYNOPSIS:** Arguably, this is Fitzgerald’s best work and is considered one of the top ten best American novels ever written. It takes place during the Roaring Twenties, when America was struggling with the prohibition of alcohol, social class structure, and fear of rising crime due to underground markets. The wealthy Jay Gatsby is reunited with his young love, Daisy Buchanan, who is stuck in a loveless marriage to an arrogant man. Narrator Nick Carraway recounts the story of Gatsby and Daisy, revealing that the yearning for material possessions and what one cannot have only leads to emptiness. Fitzgerald unravels the complexities of hypocrisy during this time in American history and offers a lesson on moral degradation.

**→ REASON FOR TEACHING:** This novel utilizes a complex narrator, who also happens to be a complex character in the novel. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include narrator, audience perception, reliability of characters, symbolism, theme, tone, twist of plot, and elevated writing style. Content discussions will include an analysis of expository texts that explain the purpose behind the Prohibition and whether it benefitted or hurt the states. We will also discuss the challenges of social classification, the emptiness of possessions and wealth, the effects of moral degradation.

**DISCLAIMER:** This text includes party scenes where illegal alcohol is consumed. One character is involved in an affair (no explicit content). Other characters struggle with their consciences and question whether consequences are worth the temporary fun that sin provides. There are scenes of violence, including a scene where a man slaps a woman.
The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

SYNOPSIS: This is arguably Hawthorne’s most known and celebrated novel. It is set in Massachusetts in the late 1840s, and looks at a Puritan colony grappling with the concepts of good and evil, and the human response to sin. Through the independent Hester Prynne, the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, and the vengeance-seeking Roger Chillingworth, Hawthorne reveals three starkly different ways to deal with sin and the consequences of one’s actions.

→ REASON FOR TEACHING: This text introduces students to complex characterization and how authors can use characters to develop theme. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include symbolism, ambiguity, characterization, and theme. Students will also connect American history to the occurrences in this text and evaluate Hawthorne’s perspective. Content discussions will look at human response to guilt, shame, humiliation, independence, repentance, and revenge.

DISCLAIMER: Since this novel focuses on sin and the consequences of one’s actions, characters make choices that do not align with Scripture—most notably, an affair (no explicit content). The book also includes some minor acts of violence and period-related material, including prejudices against Native Americans, irrational fear of witches, and superstitions.

Twelve Angry Men by Reginald Rose

SYNOPSIS: This three-act play was originally an Emmy-award winning television movie. After its success, Sherman Sergel re-wrote Reginald Rose’s text as a play, and it has appeared in various versions throughout the theater world since. The story focuses on the twelve jurors assigned to a case where a 19-year-old boy has been accused of murder. It looks like an easy verdict, until one juror risks disagreeing with the other eleven. The events that follow illustrate the role of democracy and the judicial system, as twelve very different individuals must come to a unanimous decision about one boy’s fate.

→ REASON FOR TEACHING: This play will serve as our introduction to drama for this course. Concepts reviewed and evaluated through this text include stage directions, scenes and acts, characterization, persuasion, argument, and development of plot. Students will simultaneously be reading expository text regarding the American
judicial system; therefore, they will compare and contrast Rose's fictional representation of a jury room to various nonfiction cases and articles. Content discussions will look at prejudices, truth vs. lying, personality differences, civic responsibility of citizens, the value of human life, and persuasion.

**Up From Slavery by Booker T. Washington**

**SYNOPSIS:** This autobiography tells the unique story of a slave boy who became an impactful spokesperson for his people. Washington begins his story by telling his boyhood memories of slavery, the Civil War, Emancipation, and the hard years that followed. Eventually, Washington found opportunities to become educated and he worked tirelessly to guarantee proper education for all colored people, no matter their ability to pay. He became a voice that individuals learned to respect because he stood fast against the “social and ideological biases prevalent in his day.”

**REASON FOR TEACHING:** We will only cover four chapters of this autobiography; however, these four chapters are rich in imagery, concrete detail, and persuasion. The class will specifically evaluate Washington’s infamous speech at the Atlanta Exposition, analyzing the structure of the speech, the persuasive language, his balance between logos and pathos, and his ability to speak the truth while capturing two seemingly opposite audiences.

**DISCLAIMER:** Washington refers to a few examples of the physical and mental terrors that African Americans endured during slavery and the years that followed.